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The Golden Pandemic

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The work in my senior show is a representation on how I feel about conventional focusing specifically on corn. The reason that I have chosen corn is because it is one of the most detrimental crops that we are growing in the US. It is grown specifically for livestock feed and ethanol with a minimal fraction for direct human consumption. Corn itself offers minimal nutritional benefits in comparison to most other vegetable crops and the overproduction of corn crops decreases the benefits all the more.

Artwork:

- Woodblock Print Series: The extent of how much land is actually used for corn production in relation to other vegetable crops is a staggering figure when regarded on its own. However, finding these actual statistics is not an easy task. When looking at USDA agricultural surveys you encounter roughly 700 pages of farming statistics. Sifting through all that data is a daunting task even for the most determined of people. In a way I believe that this is almost a tactic used by Big Agriculture in order to make it as hard as possible for people to see what is really going on. Therefore in my woodblock print series, I sifted through the 695 pages of the 2012 Agricultural Survey to find what I believe to be the most important statistics and transcribed them onto woodblock prints. To convey what a backwards agricultural system we have in place in the US, I reversed the direction of the charts and the title of the piece in order to distract the viewer and force them to read everything in a backwards manner.
- Cans on Shelf Sculpture: This sculpture is a direct representation of the ratio between corn land and fresh vegetable land use in the United States. The exact ratio according to 2014 USDA Agricultural Survey is: .09% total US land area for fresh market vegetables compared to 4.1% total US land area for corn land. In order to really get a full grasp of

how much land this really is, take into consideration that all of New England makes up 1.8% of total US land area which is less than half as much land as is used to grow corn.

- Table with Corn Sculpture: This sculpture represents what we indirectly eat in many of our meals. Corn starch and oil is in an enormous proportion of the food we eat and is in many foods we don't even realize that it is in. Along with this almost all livestock in the US is fed corn feed every single day. The animals eating this feed often only ever eat it throughout their short lives leaving them unhealthy, diseased, and full of antibiotics and hormones. Therefore the health benefits from eating this meat are next to nil and the detrimental effect on our own bodies has yet to be seen. An eye-opening study done by plant biologist Todd Dawson found that the 69% of the carbon makeup of an average American's hair came from corn.
- Self-Portrait Sculpture: I myself am one of the many Americans that is an omnivore and throughout my own life; I have eaten my fair share of industrially farmed meat as well as food loaded with calories from corn. The more I consider the detrimental effects that my average lifestyle has on both the environment and on my own body, I feel physically ill. Although I am not as wasteful as many, no matter how hard we try, it is literally impossible in this day and age not to negatively affect the earth but the only hope we have is to slow the damage.

These works are presented in the show as almost a narrative beginning the cans on the shelf as the purchasing of the advertised product, the table as the consumption of the product, and the self-portrait as the rejection the product and corn production as a whole. Throughout all of the artwork in my show my goal is to convey the issues of corn production in a very minimalist way. Although these issues are truly very complex, sometimes they can be too overwhelming to fully

process. Therefor I see my work as more of a conversation starter and through it I hope to encourage a discussion about what we put in our bodies and how we treat our land.

2012 and Earlier Census Years

2002	2007	2012	All farms
68,236,523	86,448,542	87,413,045	CORN for grain acres
6,663,995	5,979,661	7,196,628	CORN for green chop acres
3,698,744	4,682,588	4,492,066	Vegetables harvested acres
5,330,439	5,039,476	5,199,729	land in orchards acres
74,064,518	92,428,203	94,609,673	CORN totals acres
9,029,183	9,722,064	9,691,795	fruit and veg totals acres

Yield per Acre Irrigated: 2012

Yield per acre	Acres	Farms	Crop
171.1	6.202.712	20.040	CORN for grain (bushels)
23.8	1.466.068	7.808	CORN for green chop (tons)
(X)	2.712.516	28.361	Land in vegetables
(X)	4.078.372	54.424	Land in orchards
194.9	7.668.780	27.848	CORN totals
(X)	6.790.888	82.785	Fruit and veg totals

North American Industry Classification System: 2012

Cropland	Acres	Farms	NAICS
32,297,534	454,064,220	1,054,987	Total production
88,821,359	107,075,030	167,043	CORN farming
5,333,876	8,206,468	43,021	Vegetable farming
5,641,474	13,162,702	93,020	Orchard farming
1,483,765	4,502,514	52,777	greenhouse farming
12,459,115	25,871,684	188,818	Fruit and veg totals
88,821,359	107,075,030	167,043	CORN totals

State Summary Highlights: 2012

Acres in corn	Acres in farms	Farms	State
94,609,673	94,527,667	2,109,303	Total
293,699	8,902,654	43,223	Alabama
(X)	833861	762	Alaska
66,100	26,249,195	20,005	Arizona
699,211	13,810,786	45,071	Arkansas
668,242	25,569,001	77,857	California
1,168,436	31,886,676	36,180	Colorado
27,984	436,539	5,977	Connecticut
182,994	805,652	2,451	Delaware
67,045	9,548,342	47,740	Florida

State Summary Highlights: 2012

Acres in corn and in farms	Farms	State
478,462 2,030,745	12,256	Maryland
222,982 523,517	7,755	Massachusetts
2,703,213 9,948,564	52,194	Michigan
8,678,011 25,035,838	74,542	Minnesota
903,335 10,931,080	38,076	Mississippi
3,451,304 28,266,137	99,171	Missouri
102,901 59,758,917	28,008	Montana
9,534,237 45,331,783	49,969	Nebraska
10,813 5,913,761	4,137	Nevada
9,577 15,057	9,071	New Jersey

State Summary Highlights: 2012

Acres in Corn	Acres in Soybeans	Farms	State
342,341	9,620,836	42,257	Georgia
5,198	1,129,317	7,000	Hawaii
367,153	11,760,109	24,816	Idaho
12,434,821	26,937,721	75,087	Illinois
6,174,513	14,720,396	58,695	Indiana
14,101,712	30,622,731	88,637	Iowa
4,288,462	46,137,295	61,773	Kansas
1,649,744	13,049,347	77,064	Kentucky
228,714	7,900,864	28,093	Louisiana
528,714	1,451,104	8,173	Maine

State Summary Highlights: 2012

Acres in CORN and alfalfa	Farms	State	
114,967	43,201,023	24,721	New Mexico
1,174,153	7,183,576	35,537	New York
849,670	8,114,756	50,218	North Carolina
3,617,093	39,262,613	30,961	North Dakota
3,830,187	13,960,604	75,462	Ohio
32,626	34,356,110	380,245	Oklahoma
87,314	116,301,578	35,439	Oregon
141,071	7,704,444	59,309	Pennsylvania
240	69,589	1,243	Rhode Island
320,861	4,971,344	81,989	South Carolina

State Summary Highlights: 2012

Acres in CORN	Land in farms	Farms	State
5,881,753	43,257,079	31,989	South Dakota
1,009,230	10,257,812	68,050	Tennessee
17,894,551	130,153,438	248,809	Texas
86,360	19,743,369	18,027	Utah
91,290	1,231,713	7,338	Vermont
564,250	30,244	46,030	Virginia
207,755	14,748,107	37,249	Washington
50,609	3,606,674	21,489	West Virginia
4,260,497	14,568,926	69,754	Wisconsin
94,681	30,363,641	11,736	Wyoming





















